

Message Text

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TAGS: OREP (MOFFETT, TOBY/MILLER, GEORGE/HARKIN, TOM)

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1. FOLLOWING PRESS STATEMENT ISSUED IN CONJUNCTION WITH PRESS CONFERENCE, 11:00 A.M. MARCH 17 BY CODEL. SEPARATE CABLE FOLLOWS ON EXCHANGE WITH PRESS.

2. QUOTE:

THREE U.S. REPRESENTATIVES RETURNED FROM A SIX-DAY FACT-FINDINGTRIP TO CHILE YESTERDAY AND SAID THEY WOULD PRESS FOR A CUT-OFF OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THAT COUNTRY.

REPRESENTATIVES TOM HARKIN (D.IOWA) GEORGE MILLER (D.CAL.), AND TOBY MOFFETT (D.CONN) SAID IN A WEDNESDAY NEWS CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON THAT "AS LONG AS U.S. AID KEEPS FLOWING THROUGH THE PIPELINE, THERE IS NO DETERRENT TO THE MILITARY JUNTA'S REPRESSIVE HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES."

CALLING THEIR TRIP "THE MOST INTENSIVE ANALYSIS" OF CHILE SINCE THE JUNTA OVERTHREW PRESIDENT
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SALVADOR ALLENDE ON SEPTEMBER 11, 1973, THE THREE

CONGRESSMEN SAID THEY HAD EVIDENCE OF WIDESPREAD DETENTION OF INDIVIDUALS WITHOUT TRIALS, EVIDENCE OF TORTURE, KILLINGS OF JUNTA OPPONENTS AND THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THOUSANDS OF PERSONS.

"A PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THIS TRIP," THEY EXPLAINED, WAS TO DETERMINE THE REAL EFFECT OF U.S. FOREIGN AID DOLLARS." THE JUNTA HAS RECEIVED 1.2 BILLION DOLLARS IN AID AND LOANS FROM TAXPAYERS' FUNDS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTED IN PART BY U.S. TAX FUNDS.

THE FIRST-TERM CONGRESSMEN SAID THEY MET WITH JUNTA LEADERS, FORMER PRESIDENT EDUARDO FREI, CARDINAL RAUL SILVA HERNANDEZ AND OTHER OFFICIALS AND FORMER OFFICIALS IN CHILE.

THE CONGRESSMEN SAID: "WE TALKED WITH LABOR LEADERS NOW WITHOUT TRADITIONAL LABOR RIGHTS, PROMINENT LAWYERS WITHOUT TOOLS TO DEFEND THEIR CLIENTS, FORMER PUBLIC OFFICIALS AND ARMED FORCES OFFICERS IN JAIL WITHOUT RESPONSES TO THEIR APPEALS, AND DISTRAUGHT WIVES AND MOTHERS OF PERSONS WHO HAVE DISAPPEARED.

"DURING OUR STAY, IT BECAME INCREASINGLY CLEAR THAT THE JUNTA, WITH ALL THE SINCERITY AND CONVICTION IMAGINEABLE, RULES NONETHELESS BY TERROR. WE FOUND A SILENT AND PERVASIVE FEAR IN ALL SEGMENTS OF CHILEAN SOCIETY, THE OLDEST OF LATIN AMERICAN DEMOCRACIES. THE JUNTA IS NOW DIRECTING AND INCREASING THE WRATH OF ITS INTELLIGENCE AND TORTURE APPARATUS AGAINST FORMER MEMBERS OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY, A PARTY BASED IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, A PARTY WITHOUT ANY HISTORY OF VIOLENCE OR REVOLUTION." ALL POLITICAL PARTIES ARE NOW BANNED IN CHILE.

THE THREE REPRESENTATIVES SAID THAT MANY OF THE PEOPLE WITH WHOM THEY SPOKE HAD INITIALLY EITHER SUPPORTED OR ACQUIESCED IN THE 1973 MILITARY TAKE-UNCLASSIFIED

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OVER OF THE GOVERNMENT BECAUSE OF THEIR UNHAPPINESS WITH THE ALLENDE GOVERNMENT, BUT NOW ARE QUITE FIRM IN THEIR DESIRE FOR A RENEWAL OF THEIR CIVILIAN RIGHTS.

IMMEDIATELY UPON RETURNING, THE THREE CONGRESSMEN MET WITH REP. THOMAS MORGAN, CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE, TO INFORM HIM OF THEIR

FINDINGS. THEY ALSO BRIEFED OTHER MEMBERS OF THE
COMMITTEE AND MET WITH SENATOR EDWARD KENNEDY (D.MASS).
KENNEDY'S AMENDMENT TO THE FOREIGN MILITARY AID BILL
NOW BEING CONSIDERED BY A JOINT HOUSE-SENATE CONFERENCE
COMMITTEE BANS ALL MILITARY AID TO CHILE, WHILE THE
HOUSE VERSION CONTAINS MUCH LESS STRINGENT RESTRICTIONS.
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